

REMARKS

Applicant notes the indicated allowability of Claim 66.

The examiner has objected to Claims 64 and 65. The claims have been amended as appropriate.

Claims 69 and 71 stand rejected as anticipated by Nagatani et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,863,114). Claims 41-65, 67, 68, 70, and 72-75 stand rejected as obvious over Nagatani et al. alone, or in combination with other references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is solicited.

Nagatani et al. is not pertinent art. The independent Claims 41, 56, 67, and 72 have each been amended to specify lighting systems comprising units or systems of lighting units having light emission properties for illuminating a space, such as a room, a workplace, a desktop, a retail store, etc. Claim 69 is directed to such a lighting unit and Claim 63 is directed to a method of manufacturing a such units. Claim 68 is directed to a method of a method of changing the light emission properties of light units in such a system.

Nagatani et al, the reference forming the basis of all rejections, discloses lighting panels for surface light sources and display panels (see col. 1, lines 5-7), such as signs and background lighting for LCD displays. Since such surface lighting panels and background lighting sources are not analogous to lighting units having light emission properties for illuminating a space, Nagatani et al. is not relevant to the present claims. Accordingly, all rejections based on Nagatani et al. must be withdrawn.

Further, the examiner acknowledges that Nagatani et al. fails to disclose a system of light units, but only discloses single lighting panels. The examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to use a plurality of the elements having different properties disclosed in Nagatani et al.

to increase light output. The examiner's motivation for this assertion is in error. The examiner has provided no basis as to why the simultaneous use of prism plates having different properties would "increase light output" making such use obvious. Moreover, the present invention is not directed to increasing light output, or to the simultaneous use of prism plates having different properties.

The examiner cites MPEP 2144.04, however this citation is misplaced. MPEP 2144.04 is directed that the duplication of parts has no patentable significance unless an unexpected result can be shown. The examiner erroneously relies on this premise to support the assertion that the use of "different" elements, not the duplication of elements, is obvious. Many of the claims include the limitation that the light emission properties of the units may be changed by interchanging elements having different properties, not by the duplication of parts. There being no disclosure or suggestion from Nagatani et al. of a lighting system where the light emission characteristics of the units in the system can be changed by interchanging prism plates in the units, the rejections must be withdrawn.

Still further, Nagatani et al. disclose that several prism plates may be substituted for the prism plates shown in Figs. 2 and 3. However, Nagatani et al. discloses that by the substitution of the prism plates, the brightness of the panel may be adjusted. There is no disclosure or suggestion from Nagatani et al. of lighting units having one of a plurality of predetermined light emission properties for illuminating a space.

With respect to Claim 70, there is no disclosure of a lighting unit having two or more light permeable components positioned side-by-side.

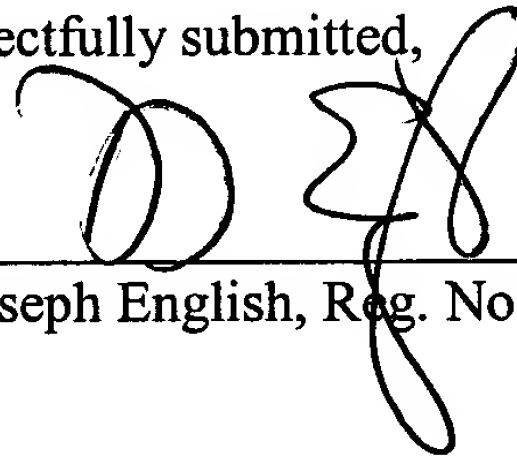
With respect to Claim 71, Applicant does not understand the rejection. Claim 71 stands rejected as anticipated, however, Claim 67 from which Claim 71 depends is rejected as obvious.

The dependent claims are patentable with the respective independent claims without resort to the additional patentable limitations recited therein.

Consideration and allowance of new Claims 76-78 is solicited. No new matter has been added.

A further and favorable action and allowance of all claims is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. English', written over a horizontal line.

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